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# Changing littering practices at Glastonbury Festival

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## Abstract

### Findings:

### Implications:

### Limitations:

### Contribution:

### Keywords:

Introduction (problem statement then how currently tackled then known literature)

### Problem

Since 2011, music festivals have seen the most growth in popularity in the leisure sector. Festivals now account for around 13,500 full time jobs in the UK, with spending within the live music and festival market amounting to over £2billion. Contributions of over £73million to the worldwide economy have meant that Glastonbury Festival has cemented itself as the largest greenfield festival in the world, and prides itself as having provided a 'template' for festivals that have since followed. Glastonbury Festival has evolved from a gathering of 1500 people with a desire to move away from over-commercialisation, to 170,000 attendees spending almost £300 each during the temporary five-day city within the countryside that it has now become, with a 22,700% increase in ticket costs since its initial year.

'Any event with 177,550 attendees will generate significant levels of litter', (Glastonbury, 2016). Sustainable measures have been put in place by the team at the festival to curb the environmental impact of the event. Recycling is handled by 1300 volunteers, and in 2014, half of the waste produced was recycled from the 100 pens on site; traders must adhere to strict rules on waste disposal and are forbidden from providing plastic cutlery, plates or cups to attendees; and they have installed 1500 square metres of solar panels to provide power- amongst many other strategies that have been successfully implemented. The issue for Glastonbury Festival, and indeed other outside music festivals, stems from attendee behaviour.

Far from the original intentions of conserving 'natural resources; [and respecting] nature and life,' (Kerr, 2011, p. 202) Glastonbury Festival must now dedicate £780,000 to the disposal of waste at the end of the event due to the amount of litter that is generated. Naturally, through the commodification of festivals in general, and the loss of 'authentic festival experiences', the objectives and behaviours of festival attendees has shifted. Festivals are now 'entertainment productions' (Getz, 2012, p. 29), questionably defined by 'festive behaviour' rather than the provision of safe spaces from commercialisation – cultural celebration. There are numerous potential reasons behind this shift- the influx of music and entertainment festivals both nationally and internationally has satisfied the quickly increasing demand seen over the past six years, and has brought with it a 'rebellious youth' demographic (McKay, 2000, p. 193).

The changing demographic of music festivals and the subsequent consequences has not gone unnoticed. Since the 1990s, previously regular attendees have noticed the changing attitudes from the younger audiences. 'I feel that the festival is an inevitable reflection of our culture- it's primarily about non-responsibility over consumption of music, drink, drugs, festive food and the whole festive experience. It's about the rebellious youth of today being hypnotised into the idea that they are doing their own free thing', (McKay, 2000, p. 193). We can run this alongside football hooliganism, and a desire to be a part of the 'in-crowd' to gain the social advantages associated with them (prestige, reputation etc. or whatever they may be). By behaving in a way that is different to how they normally would in their daily life, attendees exhibit behaviours that they consider 'rebellious' or defiant, without the consideration that these actions have potentially become expected of them. Impacts of festivals demonstrate how this detachment from responsibility and the resulting behaviours can be pushed to the extreme over a variety of areas, including socially and environmentally.

*Littering is a big problem anyway...* (Briony – really recent lit)

*How currently tackled*

Numerous campaigns have been implemented at Glastonbury Festival to appeal to the individual. 'Love the farm, leave no trace' encourages attendees take all physical evidence away with them at the end of the festival, with only memories remaining. 'Don't pee on the land' promotes the compost loos whilst highlighting the potential destruction of 200,000 people urinating on the ground. And 'Take it, don't leave it' fights the concept of disposable culture by asking attendees to invest in high quality camping equipment to use on multiple occasions. There is a difficulty in designing campaigns that allow attendees to fulfil their festival objectives whilst maintaining a sense of their impact and responsibility.

At festivals, it is usually the solid waste that remains at the end of the event which acts as a representation of how sustainably effective it has been. Organisers use this as a way to gauge how successful their practices are. However, this does not show the specific results of individual campaigns that have been implemented, but only provides an overall conclusion (Cierjacks et al., 2012, p. 328).

Studies on littering in general demonstrate the importance of the environment, and the 'power' of descriptive norms- if an area is clean, the message is that the accepted behaviour is to dispose of waste, rather than litter (Bator et al., 2011, p. 297). Bator et al talk of how prosocial behaviour 'tends to decrease when there are more people present, based on diffusion of responsibility', (2011, p. 297) in the same way that individuals can lose themselves within a mob and shed the awareness of their behavioural consequences. **MORE HERE (Briony).**

As previously mentioned, the intention and motivation behind attending a festival cannot be disregarded when planning strategies to target the anti-social behaviour. There are festivals that have been created to promote sustainability, and have sustainable living as their primary focus presented in an entertaining festival environment. However, music festivals are now entertainment productions, with revelry as the key objective, which means that this escape from reality should not be shattered with harsh restrictions and obvious 'policing'. Bateson et al (2015) found that observation was an effective way to decrease littering, simply by introducing an artificial eye (on a flyer, for example) to the environment (pp. 1-2). The false cue produced a subconscious atmosphere of observation, and meant that people were more inclined to demonstrate prosocial behaviour- their individual identity was no longer masked and they behaved in ways that would 'meet the approval of

others', (p. 2).

### Behaviour change (Fiona)

Here – current approaches to behaviour change which are relevant.

- Inherent assumptions to that view of behaviour change, i.e. social psychological, theory of planned behaviour. Means that persuasion would work, attitude change.
- This involves assuming that persuasion, motivation, attitude change is the answer etc. etc.
- Link – this is inherently flawed because of what we already know about the way that littering happens.

### The limitations of individualist behaviour change to tackle littering

- Literature on littering behaviour which suggests individualist/persuasion approaches aren't going to work

#### *The problem with individualist approaches*

Controlling behaviours at events, whether positive or negative, can heavily influence experience, logistic and management strategies. Music festivals, through design, create 'wonderful opportunities for anyone to escape reality for a few days and bond with total strangers over a mutual love of music and community' (Lutz, 2016). Segregating festival personas from individual realities allows attendees to 'reinvent [themselves] and take a step back from the life [they're] so used to living' (Lutz, 2016). To put a loss of identity and a diminished sense of self amongst a crowd or community into a widely recognised context, a result of these can be violent behaviour at football matches. As Replogle (2011) notes, 'It is cognitively easier to act grossly inappropriately if others...are doing the same', and as a consequence of the herd behaviour demonstrated through hooliganism, £30 million is spent annually in the UK policing matches. The usual sequential decision making process is disrupted by observing how others behave and erratically 'joining the queue' even if this is in contrast to their private information (Morone & Samanidou, 2007, pp. 639,640). The more this behaviour occurs, the more accepted it becomes as the norm. Although an anti-social behaviour of a different kind, the impact of littering and waste at Glastonbury being the 'norm' is affecting the sustainable longevity of the event.

#### *Herd Behaviour*

- Information/rational processing is FLAWED. Doesn't happen. Not the right approach.

At a very basic level, 'herd behaviour refers to the phenomenon according to which people follow the example of other people ignoring their private information' (Morone & Samanidou, 2008, p. 639). As previously mentioned, it is the disruption of the regular decision making processes that leads to altered behaviour and 'allows' individuals to behave in ways that are unfamiliar to them, shedding their regular identity to 'join the queue' (p. 640). The differences between an individual's solo identity and group identity mean that we can separate the two into component parts (Gupta & Singh, 1992, p. 381), and it is the group identity of the individuals that is the area of interest here. There has been an emphasis on the importance of defining 'crowds', 'mobs', 'cliques' and 'groups' etc. in order to gauge behavioural traits and how to assess them. Research has demonstrated the fluidity between these definitions, and how some are interchangeable with one another. What also needs to be taken into consideration is how the gathering has formed, and whether this affects the behaviours exhibited.

Regardless of intent, it is the energy amongst group members that can define the mind-set of the gathering and how they slip from one category into another- 'crowds tend to create their own

atmosphere which pervades and infests the space that they occupy', (Cooper & Penn, 2009, p. 7). It is this concentration of collective energy, combined with the atmosphere and surroundings that can lead to anti-social behaviour.

### *Reputation*

When looking at football hooliganism in particular, there appear to be two main drivers for anti-social behaviour. The theme of reputation commonly occurs, where 'participation in football hooliganism enables supporters to gain status and prestige among peers', (Spaaij, 2008, p. 381). Spaaij notes how group members must establish their willingness by 'being game' (p. 381)- and this is achievable through anti-social behaviour and intergroup confrontation (p. 376). Despite Cooper and Penn's belief that 'mobs rarely, if ever, form for socially healthy ends', (2009, p.3) it appears as though there are indeed social benefits from being within the group (although they may not be considered beneficial externally). Spaaij links football hooligans to an 'imagined community' (2008, p. 373) which conjures up more positive imagery than when labelling them as mobs, and talks about the pleasure that the community experience from belonging (p. 376).

### *Followers*

In comparison to those who initiate anti-social behaviours in groups (or influence the direction of energy between group members), they also inspire the emergence of 'followers'. Group members follow the behaviours around them without consciously being aware of the consequences of their actions. 'Everyone is doing what everyone else is doing, even when his or her private information suggests acting differently', (Morone & Samanidou, 2009, p. 640) - but a question arises here as to the motivation for 'following'. In some instances, individuals may be aware of their private information, and that their group behaviour is wrong, but choose to ignore it (if everyone else is doing it, then I will too.) Or perhaps they are swept up in the behaviour, and fail to realise impacts- or the anonymity becomes all-encompassing and individual identity is completely lost.

### *'Crowd Control'*

Defining a gathering of people is especially important in relation to methods of how to control them. Group behaviour can quickly shift from positive to negative when being managed in an inappropriate way. A peaceful protest broken up forcefully by the authorities will result in a contextual alteration and a psychological sense of 'collective empowerment' amongst the group members against the police (Hoggett & Stott, 2010, p. 219). Hoggett and Stott's analysis of football fans shows how a relationship between police and the potential 'hooligans' leads to groups self-policing. Police acting 'as one' with the crowd results in mutually beneficial behaviours- police are friendly to the fans, and the fans then behave within their limitations. Anti-social behaviours outside of these limits are shut down by internal group members, rather than the police.

'Herd behaviour' theory suggests that there is an alternative view to the purportedly rational choices people make at festivals about their conduct. Rather than a considered decision, there are strong social influences, contextual specificities and particular cultural conventions which cannot be adequately explained with theoretical models which are based on a strong cognitive and individualist/voluntarist element. Therefore, it is the purpose of this paper to introduce to the field of festival behaviour change the alternative approach of practice theory, which has been shown to offer a useful way of conceptualising routinized, barely-deliberative problem behaviours and their solution. The next section will briefly introduce theories of practice and how they have been used in 'behaviour change', and then we move to a discussion about the implications for festival littering

management.

### Social practice: An alternative approach

#### *Social norms – collective conventions*

Rebellious behaviour has now become a social norm at festivals, especially in relation to littering. From the early planning stages before even entering the festival, attendees go with the intention of leaving their belongings behind. The development of disposable culture now means that 'it's easier to throw away paper plates than to do the dishes', (Palmer, p. 2016). Although Glastonbury Festival encourages attendees to invest in high-quality camping equipment, supermarkets and large retail stores make it convenient to purchase cheap tents designed for a single-use. With long queues and long walks to reach a campsite, the ease of taking only the 'essentials' home at the end of the festival has become an 'accepted' behaviour when packing up to go home.

Convenience and cost are only two of the factors that demonstrate the power of trends at festivals and how quickly norms can come into existence and the effect that they can have. In 2005, Kate Moss was photographed wearing Hunter wellies, and this surge of publicity enabled Hunter to rebrand their wellies as a 'fashion statement rather than a purely functional' footwear, (Willis, 2015). However, the foray into fashion has had negative implications for Hunter- higher volumes of sales has meant that production has moved overseas, and has compromised quality. Those who are looking for high quality and a 'strong emotional connection' (Willis, 2015) with the brand (the creative director of Hunter talks about how his family grew up in the countryside wearing Hunter wellies), looking for the brand from their childhoods have had to settle for a boot where practicality is beneath style, or move to other brands altogether.

In a festival context, the concepts of accepted norms and herd behaviour are intrinsically linked to one another. The behaviours and attitudes towards littering and waste disposal have altered dramatically since the creation of Glastonbury Festival, due to the commodification of the festival sector. There is conflict between an individual's injunctive and descriptive norms, potentially beginning at the initial planning stages when purchasing a tent or camping equipment. This shows the effect that descriptive norming can have on an individual, even when not a part of a group. Whether or not the behaviour is appropriate, the descriptive norms 'represent typical behaviour or what most people do regardless', (Christensen et al., 2004, p. 1297)- because littering etc has become so widely accepted amongst festival-goers, the 'is' takes precedence over the 'ought' even during the decision-making process of an individual by themselves.

With regards to recycling and green behaviours outside of the festival context, the model of altruistic behaviour indicates that rather than convincing people of the benefits of these behaviours, we should persuade them to follow the norm.

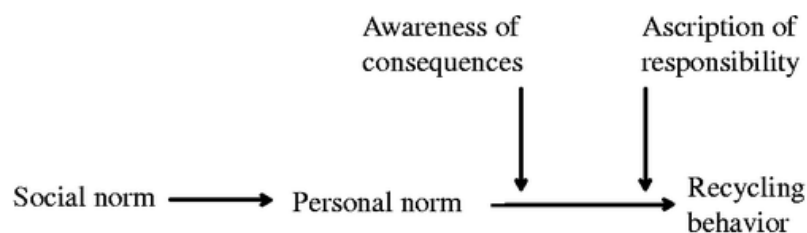


Figure 1. Model of altruistic behaviour (Hopper & Nielsen, 1991).

Attitudes and behaviours towards waste and recycling amongst younger consumers are significantly different to older demographics- 43% of 16-24 year olds in Britain agreed with the statement 'I do not like waste' in comparison to 80% of those aged 65 years and over (The Green Consumer, 2014). In general, research has been fairly consistent in finding that younger people are more likely to litter, with numerous reasons listed as to why. These differ, including developing maturity and growing up with greater affluence (Bator et al., 2011, p. 311) but all lead to the conclusion that 'antilittering campaigns are advised to direct their appeals to those younger than 30,' (Bator et al., 2011, p. 311). The issue, then, stems from changing the norms of the younger demographics as opposed to forcing the benefits of sustainability upon them.

### *Practice theory*

### *Discussion: a different approach for Glastonbury Festival?*

Cierjacks et al (2012) took a differing approach to waste management research, with focus on a particular festival. They found that the presence of bins and materials encouraging attendees to dispose of waste correctly lead to a decrease in litter, however, this was limited to specific areas- near to the bins in the festival enclosure only (pp. 330-332). Areas outside of this attracted litter, which suggests a number of different ideas. Attendees potentially felt more respectful to the festival site; they felt to be under the 'eye' of festival authorities; or the presence of promotional material encouraging a sustainable attitude towards the festival had an impact on descriptive norms.

### *Conclusion*